

# Blueprint for Advancing Equity in NYC Schools: Overview of Priorities for the Next Administration

New York City schools have improved dramatically during the last two decades, including steep declines in dropout rates, increases in high school graduation and college enrollment, and improved attendance and achievement. Yet, despite the overall progress, deep inequities continue to plague the City's education system. At every level of schooling, there have been large, persistent disparities linked to students' race, ethnicity, and neighborhood. These are rooted in longstanding racial and economic inequalities that have been exacerbated by COVID-19.

The Research Alliance's [Blueprint for Advancing Equity in NYC Schools](#) outlines recommendations to help the next mayoral administration take a more demanding approach to advancing equity, while sustaining the progress that has been made. These recommendations include:

## 1. Set an Evidence-Informed Foundation: Measure What We Seek to Change.

- Build a robust system of **education equity indicators—focused on opportunities and resources, not just outcomes**—and make the information public.
- Include measures of social and emotional learning.
- Gauge learning in more authentic and culturally responsive ways.

## 2. Reframe the Equity Agenda: Align Resources With Needs.

- Disproportionately invest and build capacity in schools and communities with the highest levels of need.
- Provide **intensive, individualized support** for students most affected by COVID (e.g., high-quality tutoring, smaller classes, mental health services).
- Meaningfully integrate schools, attending to their internal dynamics and practices, as well as their demographics.
- Improve service coordination and strengthen partnerships—to meet a wider range of student needs and provide a richer array of opportunities, inside and outside of school.

## 3. Build for the Long Term: Leverage Innovation and Learning to Improve Equity.

- Leverage promising innovations from the last year (e.g., teachers' expanded use of technology, the development of curricular resources, improvements in students' access to devices and the internet, and school and CBO efforts to meet families' basic needs).
- Use rigorous research to inform decisions about what to continue or scale up, what to modify, and what to reject.

While these recommendations focus on the education system, we must also recognize that schools do not operate in a vacuum. Reforming larger systems and structures that perpetuate racial and economic inequality is essential if we hope to eliminate disparities in education. NYC's mayor is well positioned to tackle cross-cutting inequities—in schooling, housing, healthcare, the labor market, and policing. Mayoral control makes it possible to link reforms in education to reforms in other systems. The first task of the next administration should be to assess how policies and practices throughout City government may undermine or support young people's development and academic success. Our Blueprint is designed to inform these efforts.